

Frequently Asked Questions regarding Mandatory Face Coverings in Court Facilities

Why do I have to wear a face covering to enter a court facility?

State and federal public health authorities have recommended the use of face coverings in public settings where social distancing cannot be maintained. Face coverings can reduce the risk that someone who has COVID-19 can spread the disease to others. Chief Justice Gildea issued an [order](#), effective July 13, requiring people to wear face coverings when they enter Minnesota state court facilities for business with the court.

What kind of a face covering do I have to wear?

Your face covering should cover both your mouth and nose. You may wear a simple cloth face mask, a disposable mask, or (if other face coverings are not available to you) a scarf or bandana.

What if I don't have a face covering with me when I enter a court facility?

If you are entering a court facility for jury service and do not have your own face covering, the Judicial Branch will give you one disposable mask per day of jury service. If you are litigant, attorney, visitor, or any other person using the court facility, you should bring your own face covering. You will be asked to retrieve one from your car or your office if you forgot to bring it in. However, if you do not have access to a face covering, court employees will provide a face covering for you.

Are children expected to wear face coverings in court facilities?

Children over the age of two are expected to wear face coverings in court facilities. Although children are less likely to have symptoms if infected with COVID-19, face coverings reduce the risk that children can spread the disease to others.

What if I have a medical condition that prevents me from wearing a face covering?

Be prepared to show court employees a note from your doctor that you cannot wear a face covering due to a medical condition, such as difficulty breathing. Court employees may give you a disposable face shield to wear instead of a cloth face covering.

Does wearing a face covering mean I can come to court even though I have symptoms of COVID-19, have been diagnosed with COVID-19, or have recently been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19?

No. If you have symptoms of COVID-19, or if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or have recently been in close contact with someone diagnosed with COVID-19, you should not enter any court facility. Instead, please notify your attorney if you have one, and contact your local court facility to make arrangements to reschedule your court hearing or handle your court business without entering the court facility. Contact information is available at <http://www.mncourts.gov/Reopening>.

Do I have to wear a face covering at every moment I'm inside a court facility?

Chief Justice Gildea's order does not require you to wear a face covering if you can maintain at least six feet of separation from every other person at all times when you enter the courthouse. However, if the local county government has issued its own order requiring face coverings within county-owned buildings, you must comply with the county government's order. (If the local county government has issued its own order, you can expect to see a sign at the building entrance.) If you will be speaking at a court hearing, the judge may direct you to remove your face covering in order to see and hear you clearly.